

RAGBRAI TIPS LIST 2009

There are many ways to do things, but this information was condensed from several experienced riders to help first time riders and others. Specific questions or concerns can be directed to any of the following committee members: Dana Bresler (ticket coordinator) 641-753-3114, Tom Kurth (Committee Chairman) 641-752-1148, John Eich 641-752-3991.

RAGBRAI is a bicycle ride - it's NOT a race. All participants do so at their own risk. We are guests in the host communities and we ask our riders to behave as such. The IVBC is responsible for the conduct of all minors (no underage drinking) and for the behavior of our members on the road, in the communities, and in the campgrounds. We have our own camp rules: quiet time is after 10:00 p.m. (if you want to socialize later than that please do it up town). A bag for trash and a box for recycle cans will be available in the truck. Ice cold pop will be available for purchase in the truck at all times. There will be a cash box next to the cooler with the prices posted. Price will depend on size & type of beverage (pop, water, Gator Aid, etc.).

The baggage truck will leave at 7:00 a.m. each day. You are responsible for loading your gear on the truck. If you leave early and the truck is not open yet, just leave your bags, on the ground, at the back of the truck. We cannot use the baggage truck as a SAG vehicle. If you cannot complete the ride, you must provide and arrange your own transportation home. Make sure you notify a committee member you are leaving, as we try to keep tabs on all of our riders in case of emergency or messages.

Maps of the next day's town and the locations of the campgrounds will be posted in the truck each evening. Be alert to changes in the route, campgrounds, etc. If you can't find our campground or it has been changed, go to the Main Information Board. Each day our driver will post a Bike Club Logo showing our location. If you are new to RAGBRAI, walk around in town the first night and check out the setup of the booths, shops, and Main Information Board.

Departure will be Sat. July 18 at 8:00 a.m. from the north parking lot, Marshalltown Community College. Vehicles can be left in the lot for the week at your own risk. There are several eating establishments where you can get breakfast near the intersection of Hwy 30 and Center Street (State Hwy 14). Loading of the semi with bikes will begin at 6:30 a.m. Pedals must be removed from your bike prior to loading. Pedal wrenches will be available if you do not have one and there will be people there to help you get them off. Your RAGBRAI information tags, including wrist band, baggage tag, and bike band will be given to you on Sat. morning (if you signed up to get your credentials thru IVBC). The wristband is to be worn on your wrist. Do not trade your bands with anyone as your number has been assigned to you on the Register's computer. The Register provides all registered riders with limited insurance during the ride. If you become involved in an accident while on the ride, you will be entitled to services (more about this later). If you can't come on RAGBRAI Please inform Dana Bresler, the ticket coordinator. Every attempt will be made to resell your ticket, but it must be done through us. You should not send someone in your place or sell your ticket yourself!

We anticipate arriving in Council Bluffs around 11:30 a.m. Everyone please help unload the bikes as soon as we arrive, so our semi can leave. With the arrival of 8000 or so people throughout the afternoon, there is a lot of confusion and frustration that we avoid by arriving a little early. We also improve our chances of getting a good campsite. We will be having a cheese & cracker reception from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. It will allow our members and out-of-staters to get to meet one another. There are about 110 people in our group; so you will be able to say "hi" on the road! If you purchased a souvenir pack, it will be sent to your home after the ride.

The complete week of daily route maps, with mileage between pass-through towns and other information, will be available at campground Information Centers. The bicycle route will be marked each day with red arrows and patrolled by emergency medical crews, repair van, Iowa State Patrol and RAGBRAI personnel. Food and drink will be available in bountiful amounts in the campgrounds, in churches and restaurants, and along the route. Be sure to bring along enough money (at least \$250-\$350) to cover your meals and beverages for the week. If you run out of cash, ATM machines are available in towns along the route. Bicycle repair will be available along the route and in the campgrounds. Be sure to have a safety check done on your bicycle before you arrive! Sag wagons patrol the route to pick up riders who break down physically or mechanically. Note: you may ride the wagon for a long time before you get in. It goes until it gets full before dropping you off in the next overnight town.

The Iowa State Patrol and local authorities direct traffic at intersections to ensure the safest ride possible. Be courteous to motorists and other riders. Wear a helmet, ride predictably, SOUND OFF when passing another rider, DON'T STOP ON THE ROADWAY, and please KEEP TO THE RIGHT if you are traveling more slowly than others! Most importantly, follow the RIDE RIGHT rules! 6:00 a.m. is the official RAGBRAI sunrise when you may begin riding. Support services are available between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Weather in late July is typically hot and humid with highs in the 80's and 90's. However, it is not uncommon for temps to dip into the 50's in the evening. You may want a sweatshirt or a light jacket for the evenings. Rain is very real possibility. A rain poncho or a garbage bag with holes for neck and arms works well. Some people feel you get just as wet with or without protection. Do what works for you.

EQUIPMENT: Helmet, gloves, mirror, bike bag, water bottles, tire pump, spare tube, tire levers, small repair kit, and bicycle lock.

CAMPING: Tent, ground cloth, duffel bag (limit 2 soft sided bags - 40 lb. each), sleeping bag, pillow, sleeping pad, rope, stakes, solar shower bag, and flashlight.

TOILETRIES: Towel, washcloth, toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, shampoo, soap, razor comb/brush, hair ties/barrets, deodorant, mirror, and toilet tissue. Forget hairsprays and gels as they melt with perspiration and get into your eyes. It burns!!

CLOTHES: T-shirts, shorts, a jacket, pants, underwear, socks, good walking shoes, thongs (we're talking about flip-flop shower shoes here), sleepwear, swimsuit, sweatband/bandannas. Pack everything in Ziploc bags for rain protection. A day's outfit (shorts, jersey, sox, headband, etc) for each bag works nice. Just grab a bag and you will have all the clothes for that day. Put your dirty clothes in an empty bag and seal; no smelly clothes to stink up the whole bag.

FIRST AID: Aspirin, ibuprofen, adhesive bandages, lip balm with sunscreen, sun block SPF 10 or greater, insect repellent, any special medicines, Pepto-Bismol, lomotil (anti-diarrhea prescription), and antihistamines. Sore butt stuff Ideas- A&D ointment, Gold Bond Powder, udder balm, and medicated Vaseline to name a few. Nothing works like adequate preparation though!

MISCELLANEOUS: Safety pins, alarm clock or watch, spare glasses, scouting knife, camera, film, earplugs, ID, money, traveler's checks, credit cards, medical insurance card, journal, pen, pencil, stamps, address book, small rope, few clothes pins, small bottle of hand sanitizer, Kleenex. There is usually no electricity available for hair dryers, curling irons, etc.

TIPS FROM EXPERIENCED RIDERS

Train at least 500-1000 miles. Get you bike tuned up/lubed, carry a spare tube, and it's best to know how to change a flat, although there are always people willing to help out on the route. Check the air pressure in you tires before leaving every morning. The club has tire pumps available on the truck. Tire pump end connections and how they operate vary tremendously. If you are not familiar with the types we have please ask for assistance. It's not uncommon at all (happens every year) that a rider pulls the stem out of the tube because they forget or don't know how to properly release the connector.

Ride PREDICTABLY and DEFENSIVELY! It's important that you go watch the Ride Right video at the RAGBRAI Headquarters Saturday afternoon. It's a nice break because the video is always shown in an air conditioned hall. You will learn about sounding off when passing and the proper way to get on and off the road. This is very Important! You have all day to ride; stop and enjoy the Iowa hospitality.

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement-especially the first day. Pace yourself; you have 7 days to ride.

Walking around in the evenings helps loosen the legs up.

Drink plenty of water; a bottle of water every hour is a good rule of thumb. Drink before you are thirsty.

If you develop knee pain, check your seat position for proper height and increase your pedaling cadence by using lower gears. Use sunscreen and lip balm with sun-screen throughout the day

You will be packing a dew-dampened tent every morning but it will dry quickly when you pitch it again in the afternoon at the next campsite.

OTHER POINTS

We're all volunteers and on "vacation" together, so please pitch-in and help out around camp – help put up and take down the E-Z Up canopies, and load/unload club gear (showers, chairs, etc.).

The drivers do get paid but they have very specific responsibilities. Their job is to drive the truck, stake out our campsite each day, unload the bags from the truck, keep the water jugs and pop coolers filled. Please let them know you appreciated their work. Please help keep the litter picked up around our camp site each day.

You must fill your own shower bag! This is not the driver's responsibility; their job is to get the truck unloaded and the showers setup. However, they are working for tips at the end of the ride; so they usually start filling the bags after they have unloaded the truck.

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